A

DISCOURSE

Touching

PROVISION

FOR

The Poor.

Written by

Sir Matthew Hale, late Lord Chief Justice of the *Kings Bench.*

LONDON:

Printed by *H. Hills*, for *John Leigh* at *Stationers Hall*, and are to be sold by the *Booksellers* in *London*. 1683

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THE PREFACE.

A Due care for the Relief of the Poor is an act, 1. *of great Piety towards Almighty God, who requires it of us: He hath left the Poor as his Pupils, and the Rich as his Stewards to provide for them: It is one of those*

great Tributes that he juſtly requires from the reſt of Mankind; which, becauſe they cannot pay to him, he hath ſcattered the Poor among the reſt of Mankind as his Subſtitutes and Receivers.

2. *It is an act of greateſt Humanity among men. Mercy and Benignity is due to the very Beaſts that ſerve us, much more to thoſe that are partakers of the ſame common nature with us.*

3. *It is an act of great Civil Prudence and Political Wisdom: for Poverty in it self is apt to Emasculate the minds of men, or at least it makes men tumultuous and unquiet. Where there are many very Poor, the Rich cannot long or safely continue such; necessity renders men of Phlegmatique and dull natures stupid and indisciplinable; And men of more fiery or active constitutions rapacious and desperate.*

At this day it ſeems to me that the Engliſh *Nation is more deficient in their prudent Proviſion for the Poor than any other cultivated and Chriſtian State; at leaſt that have ſo many opportunities and advantages to ſupply them.*

In ſome other Countries a Beggar is a rare ſight; Thoſe that are unable to maintain themſelves by Age or Impotency are relieved. And thoſe that are able to ſupply their

wants

wants by their Labour are furnished with Imployments suitable to their condition.

And by this means there is not only a good and orderly Education and a decent face of the publique; But the more populous the State or Country is, the Richer and the more wealthy it is.

But with us in England *for want of a due regulation of things the more Populous we are the Poorer we are; so that, that wherein*

the Strength and Wealth, of a Kingdom consists, renders us the weaker and the poorer.

And which is yet worse, Poor Families which daily multiply in the Kingdom for want of a due order for their Imployment in an honest course of life whereby they may gain subsistance for them and their Children do unavoidably bring up their Children either in a Trade of Begging or Stealing, or such other Idle course,

courſe, which again they propagate over to their Children, and ſo there is a ſucceſſive multiplication of hurtful or at leaſt unprofitable People, neither capable of Diſcipline nor beneficial Imployment.

It is true we have very ſevere Laws againſt Begging the very giver being in ſome caſes ſubject to a penalty by the Statute of 1 Jac. cap. 17. *But it takes little Effect. And indeed as the caſe ſtands*

with us it is no reaſon it ſhould: for what man that is of ability can have the conſcience to deny an Alms, or to bring a Wanderer to the puniſhment directed by that Statute, and the Statute of 39 Eliz. *when he cannot chooſe but know that there is not that due courſe provided, or at leaſt uſed, that Perſons neceſſitous, and able to work may have it; Indeed were there a clear means practiſed for the Imploying of poor*

poor Persons, It were an uncharitable action to relieve them in a course of Idleness. But when I do not know that there is such a Provision, I dare not deny my relief, because I know not whether without it he may be starved with hunger, without his own default.

We have also very severe Laws against Theft, possibly more severe than most other Nations, yea, and than the Offence in it self simply

ſimply conſidered deſerves;
And there is little to
be ſaid in the defence of
the ſeverity of the Law
herein, but the multitude
of the Offenders and the
deſign of the Law rather
to terrify than to puniſh;
ut metus in omnes, pœna
in paucos: *But it is moſt*
apparent that the Law is
fruſtrated of its deſign
therein; for although more
ſuffer at one Seſſions at
Newgate *for Stealing and*
Breaking up Houſes, and
Pickin

Picking of-Pockets, and such other Larcenies out of the protection of Clergy, than suffer in some other Countries for all Offences in three years, yet the Goals are never the Emptier: Necessity, and Poverty, and want of a due Provision for the Imployment of Indigent Persons, and the custom of a loose and Idle life, daily supply with advantage the number of those who are taken off by the Sentence of the

Law

Law: And doubtleſs as the multitude of Poor, and neceſſitous, and uneducated Perſons, increaſe, the multitude of Maleſactors will increaſe, notwithſtanding the Examples of Severity.

So that upon the whole account the prudence of prevention, as it is more Chriſtian, ſo it will be more Effectual than the Prudence of remedy: The prevention of Poverty, Idleneſs and a looſe and diſorderly Education, Even of poor

Children

Children, would do more good to this Kingdom than all the Gibbets, and Cauterizations, and Whipping Posts, and Goals in this Kingdom, and would render these kind of Disciplines less necessary and less frequent.

But hitherto I am in generals, which rarely prosper into Action or Conviction: I therefore shall consider principally these things:

1. *What Provisions there are*

are already ſetled by the Laws in force for the Relief and Imployment of the Poor.

2 *Wherein the Defects are, in relation to thoſe Laws, or Proviſions, and the Conſequences thereof.*

3. *What may be thought a convenient Supply of thoſe Defects and the Conſequences of ſuch ſupplies.*

Chap. I.

Touching the Laws at preſent in force for the Relief and Imployment of the Poor.

THe Laws relating to the Poor are of two kinds, viz. 1. Such as concern the relief of the Aged, and Impotent, that are not able by their labour to maintain themſelves. 2. Such as concern the imployment and ſetting of work, of ſuch as are able. And this latter as ſhall be ſhewn, is the more comprehenſive & beneficial charity, although both

are neceſſary and become us, both as men and as Chriſtians; much more Touching the former of theſe *viz.* the relief of the impotent Poor, the Laws of *England* have provided a double remedy. Firſt, by giving great incouragement to voluntary undertakings of good and liberal minds in this kind. 2. by Compulſary means upon all.

Again as touching the former of theſe, the Statute of 39. *Eliz. Cap.* 5. hath given a great incouragement to ſuch as ſhall Erect Hoſpitals, Houſes of Correction and *Maiſons de Dieu.* And the Statutes of 39. *Eliz. Cap.* 6. *and* 43. *Eliz. Cap.* 4. have taken ſpecial care for the

the due Imployment of gifts to charitable uſes. And certainly ſuch voluntary Aſſignations argue an Excellent and Charitable mind in thoſe that ſhall ſo voluntarily give; And the Statutes have given a fair Incouragement to the Charityes of men in this kind. But this proviſion doth but little in order to relief: For 1. for the moſt part ſuch Hoſpitals, Extend but to a few aged Perſons limited to ſome particular Town, unleſs it be in the large Hoſpitals, in *London*, where there is ſome proviſion more Extenſive in reſpect both of number and age, as St. *Thomas* Hoſpital, *Chriſt-Church* Hoſpital and ſome others. 2. But

beſides this thoſe are but Voluntary and not Compulſary; although there may be ſome that may be charitably minded, yet for the moſt part men are backward in works of Charity; Self love, Covetouſneſs, diſtruſt of the Truth and Providence of God keeps moſt from overflowing Charity or Building or Endowing Hoſpitals.

2. Therefore there was a Compulſary laid upon men for the relief of the Poor within their reſpective Pariſhes, *viz.* the Statute of 43. *Eliz. Cap.* 2. being the firſt compulſary Law that I remember of that kind: And indeed it now became neceſſary to be done by a Compulſary

pulſary means which before that time was left more arbitrary, becauſe the Kingdom became then much more Populous than in former time and with it the Poor alſo greatly increaſed, and beſides many of thoſe methods of their voluntary relief was then much abated; which Statute Enables the Church-Wardens and Overſeers, &c. to do theſe things:

1. To take order for ſetting to work the Children of thoſe whoſe Parents are not able to maintain their Children.

2. To take order to ſet thoſe to work as ſuch, having no means to maintain themſelves, uſe no ordinary trade. But provides not ſufficient

Compulſaries to make them work.

3. To raiſe Weekly by Taxation a convenient ſtock of Flax, Hemp, &c. to ſet the Poor on work: But no means at the firſt, before the return of the Manufacture to pay them wages in Expreſs words, but is ſupplyed by the latter general clauſe. (*And to do and Execute all other things, as well for the diſpoſing of the ſaid Stock, or otherwiſe concerning the premiſes as to them ſhall ſeem convenient.*)

4. To raiſe competent ſums of Money for the impotent Poor not able to work.

5. Alſo

5. Alſo for the putting of Poor Children Apprentices but no Compulſary for any to receive them:

Among all theſe Proviſions the 4th concerns the relief of the Poor by Taxation, and Contributions to ſuch as are impotent, the four other particulars concern their Imployment, and of ſuch as are able to work, which is the far greater number. And although the relief of the Impotent Poor ſeems to be a Charity of more immediate Exigence yet the Imployment of the Poor is a Charity of greater Extent, and of very great and important Conſequence to the publique Wealth, and Peace

of the Kingdom as alſo to the Benefit and Advantage of the Poor.

I therefore come to that ſecond Buſineſs relating to the Poor, *viz.* the ſetting the Poor on Work.

The Laws that concern that Buſineſs of the *Imployment* of the Poor are of two kinds; *viz.* that which contains a Compulſary means of providing work for the Poor which is the Statute of 43. *Eliz.* And ſecondly thoſe Laws which are in ſome kind Compulſary to force Perſons to work; and theſe are of two kinds, *viz.*

1. Thoſe

1. Thoſe that concern Children and the Binding of them Apprentices, *viz.* the Clauſe of the Statute 43. *Eliz. Cap.* 4. before mentioned and the Statute 7. *Jac. Cap.* 1. which makes fair Proviſion for the raiſing of Money to bind them, and directs the manner of its Imployment. But as before is obſerved, hath not any ſufficient Compulſary for Perſons to take them, & perchance there might be fit to have ſome ſuch qualifications in that Compulſary which might not leave it too arbitrary in the Juſtices of Peace to compell whom they pleaſe, to take whom they pleaſe: But this is not the Buſineſs, I drive at, perchance

the general Proviſion which I deſign may make this at leaſt not ſo frequently neceſſary.

2. In reference to Rogues, Vagabonds and Idle & diſorderly Perſons, the Statute 7. *Jac. Cap.* 4. gives power to the Juſtices of Peace to ſend them to the Houſe of Correction, which they are thereby required to cauſe to be Erected. 2. Power to the Maſter of ſuch Houſe of Correction to keep them to work.

But even in this particular there are defects. 1. It is not general for all Perſons, but at moſt Idle and diſorderly Perſons. 2. That deſcription is very uncertain in reference to ſuch

ſuch Perſons, and leaves the Juſtices either too great or too little power. 3. For want of a convenient Stock to be raiſed for ſuch Houſes of Correction, and advantageous ways for ſuch work, it either leaves ſuch as are ſent without an Imployment or renders their Imployment ungrateful in reſpect of the ſmalneſs of the wages; and rather makes People hate Imployment as a hell than to Entertain it as a means of a comfortable ſupport; which though it may be well enough as a puniſhment for diſorderly perſons that refuſe to work, yet it is not applicable to thoſe that are only idle, it may be, becauſe they have no

work:

work: 4. It is a difficult thing to determine who ſhall be ſaid an idle Perſon, it is a reaſonable anſwer to that, they are Idle for want of ſuch work as they are able to do, or for want of ſuch wages as might give them a reaſonable ſupport; For there is no power given, nor is it reaſonable it ſhould, to compel Perſons, to ſet them on work, or to ſet them on work at convenient wages. 5. And laſtly, it is not univerſal; many Perſons are not within that Law which would work if they might: or if they might at reaſonable rates, whereby they might live. There is need, therefore of ſome ſuch pro-

proviſion that might be as ample as the occaſion, and without which indeed all the Laws already made are either weak and ineffectual to their Ends, and the generality of the Poor left deſtitute of a convenient ſupport and proviſion.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Touching the Power by the Law ſetled for the general Proviſion for the Poor, and their defects.

UPon the conſideration of the Statutes for the Poor the only Statute that provides univerſally is that of 43. *Eliz.* which generally makes two Proviſions.

1. For the Impotent Poor, that are not able to work: And

And it is true is a good and Effectual Proviſion for ſuch, if duely Executed. But as I ſaid before, the Plaiſter is not ſo large as the ſore, there are many Poor that are able to work if they had it, and had it at reaſonable wages, whereby they might ſupport themſelves and their Families, which oftentimes are many. Theſe are not within the Proviſion of the Law and if they come for Exhibitions, they are denyed, or at leaſt have but very ſmall, and ſuch as cannot ſupport them and their Families. And indeed if they ſhould have ſufficient Exhibition for the ſupport of them and their Families, the Pariſhes

where

where they live were not able to ſupply them in a proportion anſwerable to their neceſſities, or anſwerable to that ſupply which a full Imployment would afford them; For inſtance a Poor Man and his Wife though able to work, may have four Children, two of them poſſibly able to work, two not able: The Father and the Mother are not able to maintain themſelves and their Family in Meat, Drink, Cloathing and Houſe-rent under ten Shillings *per* Week, and ſo much they might probably get if imployed; This amounts to 26. *l. per Annum*, if there were forty ſuch Families in a great Pariſh,

and

and they lived upon this Exhibition colleited by rates, it would ariſe to above 800. *l. per Annum*, which in many Pariſhes Exceeds the yearly Value of their Lands or Rents, yet when theſe Perſons are kept on work thus much muſt be gotten by them, and without a ſupply Equivalent to this they muſt live by Begging, or Stealing, or Starve: Therefore the ſecond Proviſion is,

2. For thoſe Poor that are able to work, and in reference to them it gives power to raiſe Stocks by rateing the Pariſhioners, and ſetting the Poor on work.

The

The defects of this Provision are,

1. In the Execution of the Law already made; for let any man look over moſt of the Populous Pariſhes in England, indeed there are rates made for the relief of the Impotent Poor, and it may be the ſame relief is alſo given in a narrow meaſure unto ſome others, that have great Families, and upon this they live miſerably and at beſt from Hand to Mouth, and if they cannot get work to make out their livelyhood they and their Children ſet up a trade of Begging at beſt. But it is rare to ſee any Proviſion of a Stock in any Pariſh for the relief of the Poor.

And

And the reaſons are principally theſe: 1. The Generality of People that are able are yet unwilling to Exceed the preſent neceſſary charge, they do chooſe to live for an hour rather than project for the future; and although poſſibly trebling their Exhibition in one groſs ſum at the beginning of the year, to raiſe a Stock might in all probability render their future yearly payments for ſeven years together leſs by half or two thirds, than what muſt be without it, yet they had rather continue on their yearly Payments, year after year, though it Exhauſt them in time, and make the Poor

nothing

nothing the better at the years End. 2. Becauſe thoſe places, where there are moſt Poor, conſiſt for the moſt part of Trades-men, whoſe Eſtates lye principally in their Stocks, which they will not endure to be ſearched into to make them contributary to raiſe any conſiderable Stock for the Poor, nor indeed ſo much as to the ordinary Contributions: But they lay all the rates to the Poor upon the Rents of Lands and Houſes, which alone without the help of the Stocks are not able to raiſe a Stock for the Poor, although it is very plain that Stocks are as well by Law rateable

as

as Lands, both to the relief, and raiſing a Stock for the Poor: 3. Becauſe the Church-Wardens and Overſeers, to whom this power is given, are Inhabitants of the ſame Pariſh, and are either unwilling to charge themſelves, or diſpleaſe their Neighbours in Charging more than they needs muſt towards the Poor: And although it were to be wiſhed and hoped that the Juſtices of Peace would be forwardly to Enforce them if they might, though it may concern them alſo in point of preſent profit, yet if they would do any thing herein they are not impowered to compel the Church-Wardens

and

and Overſeers to do it, who moſt certainly will never go about it to burden as they think, themſelves, and diſpleaſe their Neighbours unleſs, ſome Compulſary power were not only lodged by Law, but alſo executed in ſome that may have a power over them to inforce it, or to do it, if they do it not, and to do it effectually, if they do it either partially or too ſparingly: 4. Becauſe People do not conſider the inconvenience that will in time grow to themſelves by this neglect, and the benefit that would in a little time accrue to them by putting it in practiſe if they would have

have but a little patience, as ſhall be ſhewen hereafter.

2. The ſecond Defect is in the Law itſelf; which are theſe:

1. No power in the Juſtices of Peace, or ſome Superintendent power to compel the raiſing of a Stock where the Church-Wardens and Overſeers neglect it.

2. The act chargeth every Pariſh apart where it may be they are able to do little towards it, neither would it be ſo effectual as if three, four, five or more contiguous Pariſhes did contribute towards the raiſing of a Stock proportionable to their Poor reſpectively.

3. There

3. There is no power for hireing or erecting a common Houſe, or place for their common Work-Houſe, which may be in ſome reſpects, and upon ſome occaſions, uſeful and neceſſary, as ſhall be ſhewen.

CHAP.

Chap. III.

The Remedy propounded.

1. That the Juſtices of the Peace at the Quarter Seſſions do ſet out & diſtribute the Pariſhes in their ſeveral Countiesinto ſeveral Diviſions, in Each of which there may be a Work-Houſe for the common uſe of the reſpective Diviſions, wherein they are reſpectively placed, *viz.* one, two, three, four, five or ſix Pariſhes to a

Work-Houſe, according to the greatneſs or ſmalneſs, and accommodation of the ſeveral Pariſhes.

2. That at that Seſſions the Church-Wardens and Overſeers of the Poor of the reſpective Pariſhes, bring in their ſeveral rates for their relief of their reſpective Poor upon Oath. And that the ſaid Juſtices do aſſeſs three, four or five yearly Pays to be levyed and collected at one or two entire ſums within the time prefixed by them for the raiſing of a Stock to ſet the Poor within thoſe Precincts on work, and to build or procure a convenient Work-Houſe for imploying the Poor, if need be,

in

in it, and for lodging Materials, and for inſtructing Children in the Trade or Work.

3. That there be yearly Choſe by the ſaid Juſtices a Maſter for Each Work-Houſe, with a convenient Salary out of the ſaid Stock or the proceed thereof to continue for 3 years, and two Overſeers to ſee the Iſſuing and return of the ſaid Stock, and to take the accounts quarterly or monthly of the Maſter as they ſhall think fit.

4. That the Stock be delivered to the Overſeers, and by them Iſſued to the Maſter, as there ſhall be occaſion, and that they alſo from time to time receive the proceed of the

ſaid Stock and the accompts for the ſame.

5. That at the End of every year the Maſter and Overſeers give up their accounts to the two next Juſtices of the Peace at times by them prefixed, and publickly notifyed to the Inhabitants of Each Precinct, to the End that they may take any Exceptions to ſuch accounts, if there be cauſe.

6. That the Maſter and Overſeers of every reſpective Work-Houſe ſtand, and be incorporate by the name of Maſter and Overſeers of their reſpective Precincts, and capable to take in Succeſſion by will or otherwiſe, Lands, Goods, or

or Money, or other Legacies or Gifts for the Benefit of the Poor, within their reſpective Precincts.

7. That they alſo be accomptable, as well to their reſpective Succeſſours, and alſo to the Juſtices of the Peace at their Quarter Seſſions for the benefit and proceed and Imployment of ſuch Gifts and Bequeſts.

8. That they be diſabled to grant any Lands to them given or bequeathed for any longer term then one Year, and at an improved Rent.

9. That if any Perſon that is able to work, and not able to maintain himſelf, ſhall refuſe to do ſo, he may be forced

thereunto by Warrant of two Juſtices of Peace by Impriſonment, and moderate correction in ſuch Work-Houſe.

10. If any Perſon imployed by the Maſter, ſhall imbezill or wilfully prejudice, or ſpoil his work, he ſhall upon complaint and proof thereof by the Party grieved to any Juſtice of Peace, and by Warrant from him receive Impriſonment or moderate correction by Warrant of ſuch Juſtice.

Theſe be the heads of that Proviſion, I could wiſh for the ſetting the Poor on work, which is but an Eſſay and may receive Alterations or Additions upon conſideration.

The

The Benefits, that would come by this Method would be very many and great: I ſhall ſet down ſome of them that occur to me.

1. By Incorporating of theſe Work-Houſes, which are the beſt kind of Hoſpitals, charitable minded Perſons would have as it were a Pillar whereunto to faſten their Charity, which would prevent many Difficulties in the faithfull Adminiſtrations thereof, and would invite Benefactors.

2. Whereas Hoſpitals provide for ſome few Poor Impotent People, this would prevent Poverty and in a little tract of time bring up hun-

dreds to be able to gain their livelyhoods.

3. Whereas in that State that things are, our Populouſneſs, which is the greateſt bleſſing a Kingdom can have, becomes the burden of the Kingdom, by breeding up whole Races and Families, and ſucceſſive Generations in a mere Trade of Idleneſs, Thieving, Begging, and a barbarous kind of life, which muſt in time prodigiouſly increaſe and overgrow the whole face of the Kingdom, and eat out the heart of it: This courſe within one ſeven Years alters the whole State of this Diſorder, and brings People and their Children after them into a Re-

a Regular, Orderly and Induſtrious courſe of life, which will be as natural to them as now Idleneſs, and Begging, and Theeving is.

For no Perſon will have need to Beg or Steal, becauſe he may gain his living better by Working.

And no man will be ſo vain, and indeed hurtfull to the Publique as to give to ſuch as Beg, and thereby to encourage them, when he is ſure they may gain their living by Working. And all the Laws againſt Vagrants, Beggers and Wanderers, will be then Effectually put in Execution, when we may be ſure they may be imployed if they

will: But till that the interdicting and puniſhing of the Beggers and Givers ſeems to me a moſt unreaſonable piece of Imprudence, as well as Uncharitableneſs.

4 By this means the Wealth of the Nation will be increaſed, Manufactures advanced and Every Body put into a capacity of Eating his own Bread; for upon what imaginable account can we think, that we ſhould not be as able to improve our Populouſneſs to our Wealth, as well as *Holland*, and *Flanders*, and *Berbadoes*, if we had but their Induſtry and Orderly Management? If it be ſaid, their Diſpoſition is more Induſtrious than

than ours: It is true in that condition that matters are ordered; but if we had the ſame Induſtrious Education, we ſhould have the ſame Induſtrious Diſpoſition: let a man, one that hath been bred up in the Trade of Begging, he will never, unleſs compelled, fall to Induſtry; and on the other ſide, it is a wonderful Neceſſity indeed that ſhall bring one bred up in Civility, and Induſtry, to Beg, as is Eaſily obſervable in many poor Places and Families.

And were there no other Benefit to the Kingdom in general nor to the particular Places, where ſuch Work-Houſes ſhall be ſettled, but this,

this, although the Stock were wholly loſt in four Years, it would be an abundant Recompence by the accuſtoming the poor ſort to a Civil and Induſtrious courſe of life, whereby they would ſoon become, not only not burdenſom, but profitable to the Kingdom, and the Places where they live.

5. By this means there would ſoon be an Improvement of the ſeveral Manufactures of the Kingdom, both for the neceſſary Conſumption of the Kingdom, and for Exportation, whereby our Trade Outward would exceed our Trade Inward, which Outward Trade, as it is the Baſis

and

and Foundation of all our Trade Inward; And the Exceſs and Overballance of our Trade Outward to our Trade Inward is the only means not only to keep our Money at home, but to gain an increaſe of Money, and ſo advanceth the true Intrinſique Wealth of the Kingdom; for as of our Hand if our Trade Outward Exceed our Trade Inward the Exceſs muſt of Neceſſity be returned in Money or Bullion, ſo if our Trade Inward Exceed our Trade Outward, the Exceſs muſt be made good from hence in Money, which muſt needs inſenſibly impoveriſh the Kingdom, and Experience makes us know it to be

be true: Now the Advance of our Manufactures would be by this means plainly Evident, for Woollen Manufactures or Cloath, the Staple Commodity of this Kingdom, would be more, & these other Woollen Manufactures, as Kersyes, Serges, Baize, which, though now confined to several parts of the Kingdom, as *Devonshire*, *Norfolk*, *Colchester*, would be by this means diffused over the whole Kingdom, and those Places which have little of Woollen Manufacture, as *Lincolnshire*, *Northamptonshire*, and other Counties, would soon fall into it; So likewise knitting of Stockings, Capps, Wast-Coats and the like. 2. Our

Our Linnen Manufactures, as Linnen Cloath, Laces of all ſorts, Nets, Sails, &c. would become native, and ſupply the Want of the Kingdom, and prevent the neceſſity of Importation of Linnen Cloath from *Holland* and *France*, of Laces from *Flanders*: And as this trade is in ſome degree uſed in *Lancaſhire*, *Leiceſterſhire*, and ſome other Places, ſo it would be communicated to other Places of the Kingdom. And it is very conſiderable the numbers of Poor that would be by this means imployed in dreſſing of Hemp and Flax, Spinning, Weaving, Whitening and the like. And if any ſhall ſay, we want the Materials,

terials, and we want thoſe that ſhould inſtruct the Poor in the Ordering of them, The Anſwer is at hand; If once the Manufacture were begun to be put into a Method by this way, all men would quickly ſow Hemp and Flax in ſome Parcels of their Tillage, and poſſibly ſome Lands that were not ſo fit for other Tillage would be imployed in this: two Acres of Hemp and Flax in every Pariſh would imploy multitudes, which now People neglect to ſow becauſe they have no way to vent or imploy it: And for Inſtructors, when once the alarm is abroad of ſuch a deſign, it will draw over Workmen from

from other Forreign Parts; and by this means we gained, or at leaſt recovered the Skill of making Woollen Cloath from other Parts, as appears by undenyable Evidence. And if it ſhall be ſaid that this will defraud and ſtraiten us of Labourers in our Woollen Manufactures; there can be no fear of that; for we have Poor enough to be imployed in both, and it is moſt certain, that the Populouſneſs of the Kingdom ſtill increaſeth, notwithſtanding its great Exhauſtings by Wars and Plagues,& Forrein Plantations, and conſequently the Poor will be proportionably increaſed, ſo that we may reaſo-

ſonably ſuppoſe that in one ſeven Years, by the bleſſing of God, the very proceeds, that will be able and fit to work, of poor Families, will be more than double to what they are now, which will continually increaſe in a kind of Geometrical Progreſſion, whereby there will be enough for double the imployment that is now for them.

6. By the means of theſe Work-Houſes, there will be an Opportunity for One or Two Perſons, skilled in any Manufacture, to inſtruct Twenty in the Trades, by common Reſort, Meeting and dayly Reſidence of Children and young People there; and there

there may be Opportunity, to teach Children to read without any interruption, in the Imployments of them that are able to teach them, or of them that are able to work.

7. By this means the yearly Contributions for the Neceſſary relief of Poor, that are able to work, and their Families, and thoſe kind of Contributions which in time will be impoſſible to ſupport the Poor, will be changed into a ſupply Every way more eaſy for them that are to pay, though at firſt it may require a more liberal aſſiſtance for the raiſing of the Stocks, and Every way more

more beneficial and advantageous for the Poor; Firſt, Becauſe they will hereby be educated and inured to a way of Civility and Induſtry. 2. They will gain a Trade, which will go along with them as the conſtant ſupport of their lives. 3. The Wages that they will gain will be a greater and better ſupport than they can have by any Contributions that are able to be aſſeſſed for them, for they may be able to gain, Two, Three, Four, Five and Six Shillings a Week, for Every Perſon able to work, which is five times more than their weekly or yearly Contributions do or can amount unto, without Exhauſting more than

than the Revenues of the Pariſhes, wherein theſe Poor are in many places: And this ſhall be demonſtrated to the Eye of any that will conſider this inſtance, which I have Exactly tryed, and Examined, and found to be true:

The ordinary Proceſs and *time, and charge of* making *a common Courſe medly Cloth* of our *Glouceſterſhire* Wooll at this day is;

1. In Every ſuch Cloath of about 32 Yards long there is Ninety Pounds of Wooll, which will coſt at this day at 12 d. *per* Pound Four Pounds 10 ſ. *viz.* ordinary in a grey Cloath.

54 l.

54 l. of Abb.		
34 l. of Warp.	4 l.	10 s.
2 l. of Mixture.		

2. The Charge of making this Cloath:

	l.	s.	d.
1 Parting & Picking	0	3	0
2 Colouring	0	16	0
3 Breaking & Spinning the Abb at two pence farthing *per* l.	1	7	9
4 Breaking & Spinning the Warp at 5 d. *per* l.	0	18	6
5 Cards and Oyl	1	0	0
6 Weaving, Spooling and Warping	1	1	3
7 Milling and Burling.	0	12	0

8 Shea-

		l.	s.	d.
8	Shearing and Dreſſing	0	18	0
9	Drawing	0	1	6
10	Carriage and Facturage	0	7	0

So the whole Charge comes to 11 l. 15 s.

Out of which deducting the Materials of Wooll, and Cards, and Oyl, *viz.* 5 l. 10 s.

Their remains Entirely for the Expence of work amount to 6 l. 5 s.

It is true at this day this Cloath yields not above 12 l. to be ſold, which is only 5 s. profit, but when Trade is quicker it may yield 13 l. or more.

3 The People that are imployed

ployed in bringing about this Cloath to be ready are 14, *viz.* 3 Weavers and Spoolers, 2 Breakers, ſix Spinners, one Fuller and Burler, one Sheerman, one Parter and Picker: The Weavers ſupply the Office of Spooler and Warper.

4 Theſe will bring about the firſt Cloath in about two Moneths ſpace: But being continued in a conſtant tract the Cloath will be brought about in three weeks time, for all the other Workmen are at work and fit the Cloath for the Weaver in that ſpace that he is Weaving the firſt Cloath.

5. Conſequently this one Loom thus imployed all the Year round allowing two Months

Months to the first Cloath, and three Weeks to every other, will make fourteen returns the first Year of Cloath ready for sale and sixteen returns Every Year after.

6. Consequently that which this yields for bare Wages to these 14 poor Workmen for the first Year is Eighty seven Pounds ten Shillings, and for the following Years is Ninety seven Pounds, and by this Computation it is Easy to see what Every Workman can gain a Week being full imployed.

7. About one hundred Pounds Stock will for ever keep

this Looms work going, and maintain theſe fourteen Workmen, and conſequently a Stock of four hundred Pounds will keep on foot four Looms work, and keep on Work fifty ſix Perſons, and be able to abide the ordinary delays of ſale incident to the Markets.

8. But if it could be ſuppoſed that the Cloath could be ſold as ſoon as made (which is not I confeſs reaſonably to be Expected) then a Stock of four and twenty Pounds would by its continual return provide Materials, and pay the Workmen for one Looms work in perpetuity: But becauſe the returns by ſale cannot

cannot be as ſpeedy as the work is done, the Stock muſt be near 100 l. to abide the delay of a Month, two, three, four or more, in point of ſale, and likewiſe to buy Wooll ſeaſonably for Work. And by this it appears that although one hundred pounds Stock by its 16 returns yields but an inconſiderable advantage to the Maſter at five Shillings *per* Cloath, *viz.* but four Pounds in the Year, yet it yields a conſiderable advantage to the poor Workers, *viz.* near one hundred Pounds *per annum*; and conſequently a Stock of four hundred Pounds yields near four hundred Pounds *per annum*. And con-

ſequently theſe fifty ſix poor People that are kept on work with this Stock of four hundred Pounds could not live better, if the Pariſh were at the yearly penſion of four hundred Pounds *per annum*, to relieve them, nor indeed ſo well, conſidering they are by this means kept in a way of imployment and honeſt induſtry; And yet without ſome ſupply either by Wages or Contribution thoſe fifty ſix poor People being deſtitute of Wages or Contributions to this value or near it, muſt live by ſtealing or begging, or ſtarve.

And

And let it be alſo conſidered that this Stock thus raiſed and ſet going maintains it ſelf by a perpetual circulation and viciſſitude, without any conſiderable help by any farther ſupply, and yet perpetually countervails a Contribution of near four hundred Pounds *per annum* for the relief of theſe fifty ſix poor Perſons.

By all which it will appear that the advantage of a Stock imployed, and once ſet on foot doth countervail a great Contribution and indeed greater then can be raiſed and yearly continued by moſt places, and will at leaſt in time render thoſe

yearly conſtant Contributions lower and leſs needful.

9. But yet farther, by this means there will be a reaſonable gage ſet to Wages of Workmen: It is not unknown how that ſome covetous Maſters in hard times, if they are well ſtocked and of abilities, will ſet on work many Poor, but they muſt take ſuch Wages as they are not able to live upon, and that alſo many times paid in Corn, Wooll, Cheeſe, and other things at rates high enough: And indeed if they will work upon theſe terms they may, but if not they turn them off, or not imploy them, and there-

thereupon the poor Workmen not being able to live without work, and having no place to reſort for any, are under a neceſſity of working to them at inconſiderable rates. And ſuch Maſters make greater advantage by this means when trade is low then when it is open: But by this means there would be a refuge for the Poor to be imployed at reaſonable Wages; and the reaſon is Evident, becauſe this being but an Expedient, not ſo much for gain to the Maſter as for Imployment for the Poor, as long as the Stock makes but good it ſelf, or be managed without conſiderable loſs, it attains its End, and

therefore may give competent Wages. But on the other hand the Trading-Maſter looks for his profit, and if his Stock turns not to him for gain he gives over, or reduceth the Workman to inconſiderable Wages that his own gain may be the greater. And although it may be there be ſome honeſt minded and charitable Maſters that will be content for ſome time to imploy their Stock though without gain, yet they are but rare to be found and ſuch as commonly hold not out long unleſs they find profit though perchance they ſuffer no loſs:

Theſe

These be some of those Considerations that shew the usefulness of this Expedient: I shall now consider some of the *Objections* that may be made against it:

1. *Ob.* It is a great business to raise for the purpose four Years Pay at once to make up a Stock, and yearly Contributions are more Easy.

I answer, It is true, and yet the advantage even to the objecters themselves is even to their sense apparently great: If a man had a Rent of Inheritance issuing out of his Land, he

would not think much of giving ſixteen Years purchaſe to buy it in: And the charge that goes out for the Poor as it is as much and as certain a Charge as a Rent, ſo it is evident to us that it hath increaſed yearly, and of neceſſity the longer things are continued in this careleſs way it muſt increaſe in an Exceſſive Proportion, and to give four Years Purchaſe to abate it, or if it were but to keep it at a Stay, were good husbandry. 2. Beſides this, let a man conſider what other loſſes do accrue by the want of a due Proviſion of Work, and an induſtrious Education for the Poor, in thieving

thieving and ſtealing, and ſending ſuch Malefactors to Goals at the charges of the Pariſh, in Proſecuting them at Aſſizes and Seſſions, in cutting and deſtroying of Woods, pulling of Hedges, and treſpaſſes to Corn and Graſs thereby, in Alms giving at the door; theſe would be, if not altogether prevented, yet, in a great meaſure they would, when that moſt unchriſtian and indeed inhumane way of Living among moſt ordinary indigent People is remedied by convenient Imployment and Wages.

2. *Obj.* But there are a ſort of Idle People, that will rather begg then work though they may be imployed, and ſo that trade of Begging and Idleneſs would be ſtill continued.

I Anſwer 1. That we do ſurmiſe a Compulſary Law to inforce Idle Perſons to work, which would prevent it. 2. By this means the Benefit of Working would Exceed the Benefit of Begging which would cauſe Perſons to leave it. 3. By the Educating of Children in a way of Induſtry there would be gradually a Diſaccuſtomedneſs to that way which would in time quite remove it. But 4. When

When men were once aſſured by a clear Evidence that the Poor might have Work upon reaſonable terms, no man would give, the Laws againſt Wanderers that were able to work, and againſt the relievers of ſuch, would be cheerfully put in Execution, which now men even upon the account of common charity cannot bring themſelves to.

3. *Obj.* But what conſiderable advantage would ſuch a Stock as four hundred Pounds do when perchance in a time of trading four or five thouſand Pounds imployed by Maſters in a Pariſh is but enough to ſet their

their Poor on Work, where it may be there are two or three hundred Perſons that are thus imployed.

I anſwer, It would be a great help to the Poor in a time of ſcarcity of Work, although it ſhould lye ſtill in a time of plenty of Work. The ſupply of Work, for a Month, or two, or three, in a Year, when Traders for Advantage give over, keeps Induſtry on the Wheels, and yields a conſiderable ſupply. 2. In good times, when there is no need of it, it is as capable of Increaſe and Improvement, being imployed as private mens Stocks are, which

which would inlarge it, or at leſt inable it to bear ſome loſs in times of lowneſs of Trade. 3. If once ſuch a Stock were going it would not only increaſe by it ſelf, but it would have continual acceſſion by Charitable Gifts, which would do five times the good thus imployed than imployed as they are in Doles and little yearly Penſions, which conſume and come to nothing, but are ſwallowed up in the preſent neceſſity of the Poor, and leave but ſmall ſigns of Advantage behind them: Whereas the following of the Method now propounded will at leaſt leave the

the Perſons, to whom it is applyed the Advantage of an Induſtrious Education and Profeſſion, which will abide by them.

4. *Obj.* But men, that are concerned for their own Benefit in the proſecution of their Trade, as for inſtance of Cloathing, and conſequently more careful than Perſons imployed for others, yet do loſe by their Trading, and many times impair their Stocks; and therefore this, that cannot be expected to be neither ſo induſtriouſly nor ſucceſsfully managed, may be in the ſame condition.

I An-

I Anſwer. 1. in general. In this way there muſt needs be one of theſe Events:

1. Either there will be *Gain*, and then it doth improve the Stock, and lays up an Advantage that may compenſate a former loſs and enable the bearing of a future loſs. And I know no reaſon but that in this management there may be ſome times at leaſt of Advantage as well as in private Trading. The times are not alwayes at a ſtand in Trade, but ſome times, and moſt ordinarily there is ſome gains in it, though not ſo much as at other times; and then

then the good times make amends for the bad.

2. Or elſe, though there be *no gain*, there will be no loſs, but it ſtands at a ſtay, and if it doth ſo this deſign attains its End, which is the Imployment of the Poor. Though it yields not the Maſter or Trader any gain, yet it yields the Poor a ſubſiſtence in their Wages and Work. It is true a private Tradeſman looks to gain ſo much as may at leaſt maintain himſelf and his Family. And if he doth not he gives over his Trading, as not anſwering his end; and it may be in ſome caſes reaſonable to do

do ſo : But though here be little or no gain, yet the End is attained, becauſe the Poor are imployed and paid though the Stock increaſe not.

3. Or elſe there *is Loſs*. To this I ſay; 1. If there be Loſs, yet it is but gradual, not altogether. Suppoſe it be twenty, thirty, or forty Pounds in a Year, in a Stock of four hundred Pounds, and by that account, yet this Stock will not be wholly exhauſted in five or ſix Years; and if it ſhould be ſo, yet the Loſs to the Pariſh would not be more than it would be if its old courſe of contribution at the height that it

it would have been during the ſpending of that Stock which is thereby, as before is obſerved, in a great meaſure remedied: 2. Theſe decays may poſſibly be repaired by charitable Gifts and Bequeſts. 3. But if it were not, yet ſuch gradual decays may be ſupplyed by the Pariſhes with the ſame Eaſe that their contribution would have been, all things conſidered, and poſſibly better times of Trade may happen at leaſt once in two or three Years which may repair the loſs, or at leaſt keep the Stock at its full gage with ſmall helps: 4. But ſuppoſe the worſt and that in the Com-

Compaſs of three or four Years the whole Stock were wholly drawn dry; I ſay confidently, that the Advantage the Country would have by a courſe of induſtrious Education of the Poor continued but one three or four Years, will more then countervail the loſs of a very conſiderable Stock, in preventing that Trade of Idleneſs which grows up in Poor Families which will dayly infinitely increaſe, and will receive a very great check and poſſibly ſuch as will for ever prevent the return of ſuch a courſe of life by the interruption of a tract of three or four Years of Imployment, and will put thouſands

thouſands in that tract of time into a courſe of trade and livelyhood which they will carry with them all their lives after.

5. And beſides all this, it is not likely the trade will ſuffer a perpetual interruption, but Even while this Stock is in this wane and declination, private men will be trading, and then in this decay and declination of the Stock (if it ſhould be unſupplyed) there will be Work at private hands, and Perſons inſtructed and fitted and able to do it, which may prevent a total interruption of an induſtrious Education and may give ſome intervals of relaxation of the Imployment of

of the common Stock, at leaſt in that fullneſs as formerly, till it be recruited by new ſupplyes. 6. But yet farther, the Method of the propoſed Imployment though it be principally bottomed upon the trade of Woollen Cloathing yet it will have other ſupplyes, as is propounded, as making of Kerſyes, Baize, Knitting of Stockings, dreſſing & ordering of Hemp and Flax, and Spinning and Weaving it. And though there were no other but the Woollen Manufacture yet if it ſhould pleaſe our Superiors to interdict the Wearing of forrein Manufactures, our own conſumption at home and the neceſſity

neceſſity that they have in forrein parts of our Woollen Manufactures would double the Trade of Woollen Manufactures.

5. *Obj.* The Poor have Work already if they will work, and the ſetting up of ſuch a publique Trade will but make Workmen the more independent, and decline the Imployment of private Traders which will tend to the decay of Trade.

I Anſwer 1. It is true when Trading is quick poſſibly they may have Work enough but upon any check in Trade they are

are oftentimes turned off unleſs they will work at Extream low Wages and ill paid. 2. When work is ſo plenteous at private hands there may be an intermiſſion or relaxation of the Imployment of the common Stock: Eſpecially if they can have better Wages at private hands; for it will be enough for this to be ſupplemental of the defects of work at others hands, and it ſufficiently attains its End if it may be a refuge at the time of need for thoſe that would work and cannot get it, and an Expedient to enforce thoſe to work that can and willnot.

6. *Objection.* Poor that do their work well, and are honeſt, and induſtrious, cannot want work when any is to be had in the country, and thoſe that are not imployed are either ſuch as will not work, or cannot tell how to work, or will ſteal and purloyn their Work: Theſe will undo the Work-Houſe.

I anſwer 1. Some times there are when the honeſteſt Workmen cannot get Work, and this will be a reſerve for them. 2. But as for others here will be an Expedient to teach them to Work that cannot, and to compell them to

to Work, that can, and to puniſh them, that are diſhoneſt in their Work. 3. And if there were no puniſhment, yet when a Work-Houſe and Stock is once ſettled, that would be ſufficient to make them Work: For when every man were once ſure that they that would honeſtly Work might have it, and reaſonable Wages, every Wanderer and Begger would be eſteemed ſuch a Perſon as will not work, or will be diſhoneſt in it, and not fit to be relieved, but the Laws to be ſeverely put in Execution againſt them.

7. *Obj.* But where ſhall we have men that will undertake the imployment and be faithful and truſty in it?

I anſwer 1. There be many poor and honeſt men, who for a ſmall Salary and a Room or two to Work and lodge in the Work-Houſe would be fit enough to undertake the Imployment of a Maſter, and yet he would have no great truſt upon him, for the Stock would be lodged in the hands of the Overſeers, and they to deliver it out, and take weekly or monethly accounts: Which Overſeers may be ſubſtantial men and at no great trouble, and eligible either by the Juſtices of Peace,

Peace, or Pariſhioners, yearly or once in three Years, and their trouble would be no greater than the trouble of Overſeers of the Poor, or Churchwardens in any Pariſh.

And thus I have haſtily and curſorily gone through the Method, Reaſons and Objections of this Propoſal, which I am ſure if it can be brought to a due accompliſhment, is,

1. A Work of great Humanity and ſuch as we owe to thoſe of our own Nature as we are men. The wiſe God did tell his ancient People that the Poor ſhould be always among them; which was, 1. To Exerciſe their Liberality and Charity in ſup-

ſupplying the wants of ſome by the abundance of others. And 2. To Exerciſe their diſcretion & induſtry to think of and ſet on foot ſuch means as might put them in a courſe of honeſt Imployment, and Encourage them in it: they that are rich are Stewards of their Wealth, and they that are wiſe are Stewards of their Wiſdom, unto that great Maſter of the Family of Heaven and Earth, to whom they muſt give an account of both; and one, I am ſure, of the beſt accounts they can give of both is to imploy them in the Reformation & Relief of thoſe that want both or either. Am I my Brothers keeper was the anſwer

answer of one of the worst of men.

2. A Work that as well becomes a Christian as any, Christianity recommending Charity as one of the principal Christian Virtues. And indeed the ill Provision for the Poor in *England* is one of the greatest reproaches to us in relation to our Christian Profession.

3. A Work for a good *English* man: The want of a due Provision for Education and relief of the Poor in a way of Industry is that which fills the Goals with Malefactors, and fills the Kingdom with idle and unprofitable Persons that consume the Stock of the Kingdom without

without improving it, and that will daily increaſe even to a deſolation in time. And this Error in the firſt concoction is never remediable but by Gibbets and whipping. But there muſt be a ſound, prudent and reſolved Method for an Induſtrious Education of the Poor, and that will give better remedy againſt theſe corruptions than the after gain of penalties can.

FINIS.